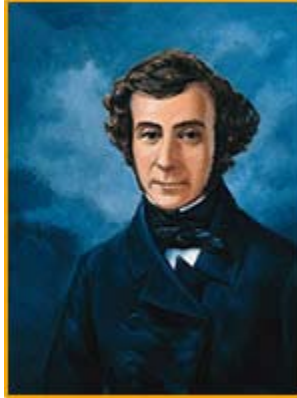


Only 26 years old when he came to America in 1831, Alexis Charles-Henri de Tocqueville traveled extensively, recording his observations of life in the young nation. Though he only spent nine months in the United States, he gleaned an insightful view of American society. His observations, readings and discussions with eminent Americans formed the basis of *Democracy in America*, a detailed study of American society and politics published in two volumes, in 1835 and 1840.



Tocqueville recognized, applauded, and immortalized American voluntary action on behalf of the common good. He wrote: "I must say that I have seen Americans make a great deal of real sacrifices to the public welfare; and have noticed a hundred instances in which they hardly ever failed to lend a faithful support to one another," eloquently capturing the essence of personal philanthropy that persists, almost two centuries later. The observation on philanthropy made by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1831 is true today; Americans understand that advancing the common good means creating opportunities for a better life for all. The name Tocqueville Society was chosen because of Alexis de Tocqueville's admiration for the spirit of voluntary association and effort toward its advancement.



The Tocqueville Society Major Gifts and Recognition Program, initiated in March 1984, is designed to deepen high-wealth individuals' understanding of, commitment to, and support of the work of United Way. The [National Tocqueville Society Award®](#) recognizes outstanding examples of this commitment to service. Membership in the Society is granted to individuals who contribute a minimum of \$10,000 annually to United Way. United Way of America provides guidance to United Ways in developing local Tocqueville Societies, which recognize outstanding volunteer service by presenting local [Tocqueville Society Awards](#); involving and cultivating new influential leadership; encouraging major gifts among high-wealth individuals; and cultivating additional resources with which to strengthen their communities.